Book Reviews

G. S. ROUSSEAU and ROY PORTER (editors), *The ferment of knowledge. Studies in the historiography of eighteenth-century science*, Cambridge University Press, 1980, 8vo, pp. xiii, 500, £25.00.

Though the eighteenth century has often been seen as an epoch in which European science was beleaguered in Augustan calm, stagnation, or even torpor, contemporaries thought otherwise. D'Alembert, for instance, deemed that all the sciences had been recently transformed in an unprecedented intellectual ferment. It is that ferment of knowledge which is examined by the twelve contributors to this ambitious volume. They have been urged by the editors to survey and appraise new approaches to eighteenth-century science; and thus to concentrate on the historiography of their chosen topic.

The first group of essays covers philosophy and ideas. Given the daunting theme of knowledge, Harré does not try to give a synoptic view of recent work. Instead, he challenges three particular orthodoxies in the history of ideas. Some of Harré's judgments are piquant: David Hume would be surprised to discover that his concerns were those of Samuel Clarke and William Whiston. In a cogent survey of natural philosophy, Schaffer attacks those who have depicted it as a monolithic body of both theory and practice. For good measure he discusses the work of Kuhn, Bachelard, and Foucault. Schaffer provides no new synthesis, but drops useful *aperçus* about science as practice and science as theatre. Shapin's analysis of the social uses of science is well written, and wider ranging than one would expect from his title. There is much to applaud in his programmatic pronouncements, especially his insistence that the empirical findings of intellectual historians must not be ignored. Yet not all the examples he cites are capable of carrying the weight he puts on them; and, in his rightful eagerness to deny that the diffusion of science was a passive process, he ignores questions concerning the justification of science when it was by no means a self-evident good thing to be used as a resource.

Four contributors examine life and its environment. In his survey of psychology, Rousseau offers an appropriate eighteenth-century discursiveness, many insights, and much information. Bynum's essay on health, disease, and medical care, is a model contribution: well researched and graced with wit, his piece provides a useful framework and specific desiderata for future research. The large theme of the living world is covered by Roger, who treads familiar ground. Not so Porter, who grapples with nothing less than the terraqueous globe, i.e., the science of the environment, which is a mental, not natural, category. His contribution is at times breathless, but he fulfils the editorial desiderata generously.

The last five essays, generally shorter than the rest, cover the physical world. In his account of mathematics and rational mechanics, Bos confines himself to evaluating Truesedell's work. For his erudite and trenchant piece on experimental natural philosophy, Heilbron draws on his recent magisterial book on *Electricity in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries: a study of early modern physics* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1979). His stress on instruments and on learning by doing can only be welcomed, but not everyone will agree that the work of Schofield and others is

irrelevant. Chemistry and the relations between science, technology, and industry are well surveyed by Crosland and Cardwell respectively. Forbes's essay on mathematical cosmography is not a comprehensive account but the story (albeit interesting) of a few German cartographers.

Compared with other recent collections of essays in the history of science, this volume parades no party line: witness the contrasting contributions of Schaffer and Heilbron, and the variety of attitudes shown to the work of Foucault. Each reader will therefore find it profitable to pillage eclectically from this book which by a variety of means generally succeeds in stimulating fresh debate on Enlightenment science.

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PAUL POTTER (editor), *Hippokrates Ueber die Krankheiten III*, (Corpus Medicorum Graecorum, I2,3), Berlin, DDR, Akademie-Verlag, 1980, 8vo, pp. 150, M.42.00.

Diseases Book 3 is one of those texts on the Hippocratic Collection which have usually been regarded as products of the so-called school of Cnidus, and have accordingly been neglected by modern historians and editors alike. This was not always so: until the nineteenth century *Diseases* 3 was valued for its descriptions particularly of those thoracic diseases which the author called peripneumonia and pleuritis. Boerhaave drew extensively upon it for his descriptions of pneumonia and pleurisy, and the text therefore has an integral position in the history of thoracic disease. Dr. Potter's edition is the first since that of Littré, and now becomes the standard modern edition of the text, as with other texts in this series. His text is constructed primarily from the two manuscripts Marcianus Venetus Graecus 269 and Vindobonensis Medicus Graecus 4 which modern research has demonstrated to be authoritative, and is excellent. Dr. Potter's decisions between variant readings are sound, and on the very few occasions when drastic intervention was called for, his emendations are convincing. The German translation gives clear guidance to Dr Potter's interpretation of the text. There is also an introduction, most of which is concerned with the manuscript tradition, a commentary, and a comprehensive word index.

The textual part of the introduction will interest the philologist rather than the historian, although there is tantalizing evidence that much work was done with the text during the late classical period. The relation between manuscripts which has been established for other Hippocratic texts is confirmed for this one, although there is, inevitably, some disagreement over the complex relations between the more recent manuscripts. Much of the detail might profitably have been omitted, though no doubt it ought to be available somewhere.

The commentary is concerned with the medical content of the work rather than with philological matters, and since Dr. Potter is a medical man as well as a classical scholar and a historian, one reads with considerable interest what he has to say. He believes that the author's "method is for the most part empirical . . . the source of his knowledge is experience". He renounces theory in describing this experience, and "because he was unable to give the real cause of any of the diseases described by him,